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"What I Learned From The Beverly Hillbillies"

By Rob Skaggs, Principal
Mintonye Elementary School
Tippecanoe School Corporation
Lafayette, Indiana



I was first introduced to Dr. Ruby Payne's book, "A Framework for Understanding Poverty" seven years ago while serving as a principal for Fayette County School Corporation. As a member of IPLA Group 40, I was pleased to revisit this body of work last April. Our presenter, Dr. Rita Pierson, gave a humorous look at a subject that is somewhat uncomfortable to discuss; the class system in our society.

If I learned anything from watching the T.V. sitcom "The Beverly Hillbillies", it would be that money (or the lack of it) may categorize you as impoverished, middle class, or wealthy, but your financial status alone doesn't mean you can successfully function among your peers in that class. Being ignorant of the "hidden rules" within the structure of your "class" may doom you to failure. The "hidden rules" are a multitude of things we are taught when we are raised. After they are learned, we use them the rest of our lives somewhat unconsciously. Even though they had millions, the Clampet's ignorance of the hidden rules of the wealthy kept them at bay with their peers.

Our schools, like most institutions in our society, are not only managed and operated to the standards of the middle class; the middle class mainly staffs them, too. While the wealthy (I'm talking private jet wealthy.) have the means to send their children to private schools that are a better fit for their way of life, families living in poverty send their children to public schools that are operated to

(continued on page 6)

IPLA Announces an Interim Executive Director

Dr. Kay Harmless will be joining the IPLA staff as the Interim Executive Director beginning August 16th. Dr. Harmless is a welcome addition to the staff and is excited to be returning to the Department of Education.

Most recently, Dr. Harmless has served as Director of Public Policy at The Children's Museum of Indianapolis. She has implemented money for school visits and identified connections between the museum, Higher education, K-12 education, youth organizations, businesses, and cultural partners. Dr. Harmless also currently serves as an adjunct professor for the Butler EPPSP program and is a member of the Governor's Early Learning and School Readiness Commission. Previously, Dr. Harmless has served as a school principal, director of curriculum and instruction, professor at Texas A&M, and manager of Prime Time for the IDOE.

IPLA looks forward to the background and experiences that Dr. Harmless will bring with her to continue to support the growth of IPLA. Congratulations!





OPENING MINDS to Closing the Gap

January 24-25, 2005

**15th Annual
IPLA Winter
Conference**

WINTER CONFERENCE

OPENING MINDS
to Closing the Gap



**LORRAINE
MONROE**



**PEDRO
NOGUERA**

Winter Conference Breakout Presenters Needed

As in the past we will offer 30 breakout sessions at the 15th Annual Winter Conference, focusing on the Closing the Achievement Gap. At this time we are looking for current practitioners who are interested in presenting. If chosen by the Winter Conference Planning Committee, presenters will receive free admission to the two-day conference, a \$150.00 value. We are looking for teachers, principals, central offices personnel, etc... who can offer valuable information to varying audiences. Applications to become a presenter can be found under the Winter Conference logo on the IPLA home page at www.doe.state.in.us/ipla.

The deadline for applications is October 1, 2004.

This is a great opportunity to share your knowledge and represent your school district to an audience of over 500 educators.

Please visit the IPLA website at

www.doe.state.in.us/ipla

to view the agenda and conference details.

**REGISTRATION
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Available**

indiana principal leadership academy
WINTER CONFERENCE

**January 24-25, 2005
Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel & Suites
Indianapolis, Indiana
(888) 627-7814**

Name _____ IPLA Group Number _____
(if applicable)

First Name for Name Tag _____

Position: ☐ Principal ☐ Teacher ☐ Superintendent ☐ Other
(check one)

School Name _____

School Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail Address _____

Corp/Organization Name _____

Corporation Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail Address _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Participant Registration

Regular Registration

\$150

This covers the cost of registration,
a continental breakfast on Day 1,
and a buffet breakfast on Day 2.

Total Amount Enclosed _____

CRU Request

If you are interested in receiving 8 CRUs
for this conference please provide
your Social Security Number below.

_____ - _____ - _____

Please check method
of payment.

☐ Check # _____

☐ PO # _____

Make checks payable to:
IPLA Alumni Association

Registration Deadline is January 21, 2005

No Refunds After January 23, 2005

Please indicate that you are a participant at the IPLA Winter Conference
to receive block room rates at the Sheraton.

Hotel reservations must be made by January 7, 2005

Mail registration form to:

Krista Orton - IPLA - Room 229, State House - Indianapolis, IN 46204
Telephone: (317) 232-9004 Fax: (317) 232-9005



Supporting Students Living in Poverty: Lessons from Ruby Payne and Others

Don Jantzi, Principal of Chamberlain Elementary School

Poverty, minorities, and educational achievement are all politically charged words that create different pictures for each of us. Our belief system at Chamberlain Elementary School states that socioeconomics, race and ethnic background should not and must not determine the educational achievement of a student. These simple words, easy to write and say, are difficult to accomplish. We are really talking about educational equality and justice for all students. How do we support students, living in poverty, to reach a high educational level that will give them many positive choices in life? The true definition of poverty is complex and can be found on Ruby Payne's website at www.ahaprocess.com. For the purpose of this article, I will use free lunch data as our poverty indicator, though that is a small part of the larger definition of poverty.

Let's start out with some facts about poverty and educational achievement in Indiana. In the DOE Website at ASAP there are 2,843 schools listed in its database. Of these 2,843 schools, 233 schools have greater than 60%, the highest state category, of their students receiving free lunches. Of those 233 schools, 78 schools have 60% or more of their students passing the total ISTEP. 36 schools have 60-70% of students passing, 35 schools have 70-80% passing, and 7 schools have above 80% passing.

Of the 2,843 schools, 146 schools have greater than 60% of their students receiving free lunches and over 50% minority. Of those 146 schools, 43 schools have 60% or more of their students passing the total ISTEP. 22 schools have 60-70% of students passing and Chamberlain is in this category (though this year we did drop down to 59% of students receiving free lunches.) 17 schools have 71-80% of students passing total ISTEP, and 2 schools have over 80% of students passing total ISTEP.

At Chamberlain, we have learned the following concepts from Ruby Payne and others to more effectively help all of our students learn. They have become a part of our school's fabric or are currently being put in place:

THERE IS NO ONE COMING TO SAVE US

We are responsible to do the work necessary to create a school that educates to a high degree our students in poverty. We must read the experts and be trained by them but we must understand that it is in the building of meaning together as a school that higher learning for our students will be created. We need to visit and talk with other schools that are succeeding and gain from their experiences and knowledge. We must have a clear moral purpose and a strong sense of unity in pursuing this purpose. We must not make excuses for our students or for ourselves. We must set the standard, supply the support, and hold students and ourselves accountable. The staff



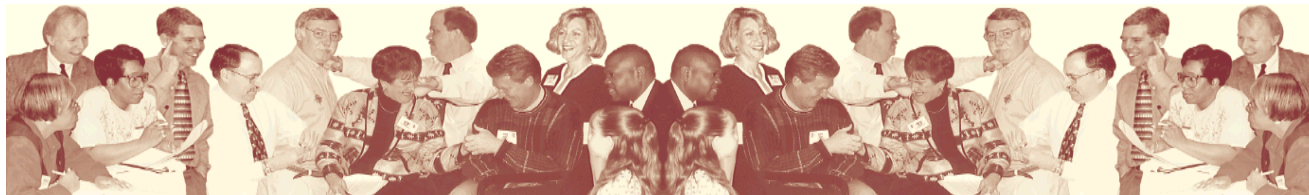
at Chamberlain is constantly learning from within and without, persistent in their beliefs yet flexible, and willing to be both leaders and followers. I am fortunate to be a part of them.

RELATIONSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS

Ruby Payne states that relationships of mutual respect become the motivator for learning for students and adults in poverty. Understanding the hidden rules of the different classes (poverty, middle, and wealth) is part of what allows relationships of mutual respect to develop. There is not space here to define the hidden rules but understanding them is critical to building these relationships. If healthy relationships are not developed between student and teacher do not expect much learning to happen. Then, we must have school conversations to determine what we want students to know and be able to do, to assess if they know and can do it, and what immediate interventions we have in place if they don't know and can't do it. Creating common meaning and common language is part of this process and only happens with honest dialogue and discussion. Finally, staff members must be able to talk with one another openly as they look at student data to discern what are the most effective instructional practices.

BUILD COGNITIVE STRUCTURES

Many students growing up in poverty have not had cognitive structures formed in their brains that are necessary for learning in a school setting.



This is not an issue of intelligence. Schools need to build these structures in students' brains. Cognitive structures that are only partially in place can only partially accept classroom teaching. Reuven Feuerstein, an Israeli educator, says that students without cognitive structures may miss as much as 50% of the text on a page. According to Ruby Payne, four structures must be built by direct teaching:

- the structure of the discipline
- cognitive strategies
- conceptual frameworks
- models for sorting out what is important from what is unimportant in text

FOCUS ON LEARNING

Define concepts of learning at each grade level based on standards and importance, assess students at regular intervals, and find ways to intervene immediately to support students who are not learning the concepts. At Chamberlain, we had been using nine-week school wide assessments with students, but we are going to every four and 1/2 weeks assessments to better know whether students know and can do the concepts being learned. During the day and/or after school time is used to support student learning for those who are not accomplishing the concepts. Time is given to teachers to look at student data, identify the instructional strategies that are most effective, and plan for the next few weeks based on the data. It's not about if we taught it. It's all about if students learned it and how we support those who haven't. Two thirds of the schools that are closing the achievement gap use data several times a month to plan instruction.

I have given some ideas of what we are doing and plan to do at Chamberlain. But, I know there are other schools that have found wonderful ways to bridge the educational divide and provide high educational achievement for students in poverty. This conversation is important to continue. Our students are depending on us to remove the educational barriers that will more fully reveal their abilities.

*As society
advances the standard
of poverty rises.*

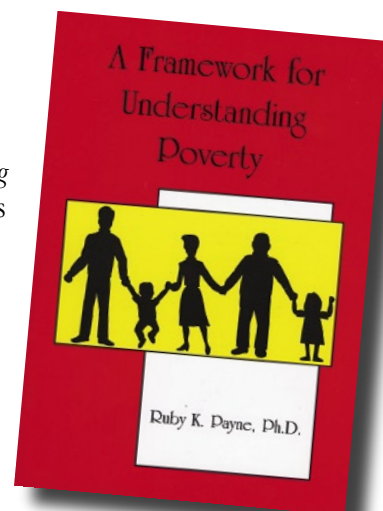
Theodore Parker

BOOKS FOR LEADERS

A Framework for Understanding Poverty

Ruby Payne

A Framework for Understanding Poverty teaches the hidden rules of economic class and spreads the message that, despite the obstacles poverty can create in all types of interaction, there are specific strategies for overcoming them. Through case studies, personal stories and observations that produce some aha! moments, Payne clearly strikes a chord in her readers., and provides a hopeful message.

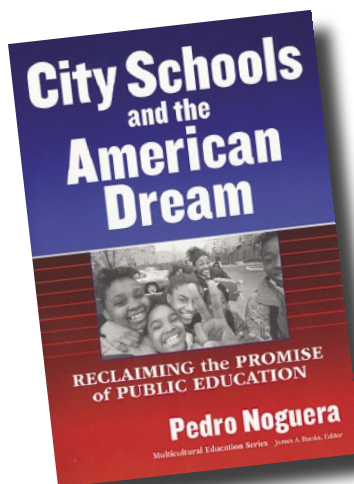


City Schools and the American Dream: Reclaiming the Promise of Public Education

by Pedro Antonio Noguera

In this engaging book, Pedro Noguera provides a compelling vision of the problems plaguing urban schools and how to address them. *City Schools and the American Dream* is replete with insights from a scholar and former activist who make great use of both personal and professional experience.

— William Julius Wilson,
Harvard University



Dr. Noguera will also be a keynote speaker at the 2005 IPLA Winter Conference.



Winter Conference Reflection

Larry Norris

Former IPLA Alumni President

As we look back to January and the Winter Conference agenda, many positive thoughts come to mind. The impact of dynamic keynote speakers provided inspiration and challenge. The instruction during breakout sessions provided education for a variety of needs. The networking of fellow administrators and teacher teams provided a reinforcement of IPLA culture. Our goal each year is to provide the best experience possible to the many colleagues who give us a portion of their professional time. This year was no exception.

As we look ahead to the impact of future conferences, a vision of change seems quite obvious. Public Law 221, Standards Based Instruction, and No Child Left Behind provide deeper challenges to administrators. The role of the principal as leader still remains. However, the role of teacher teams that provide a leader with a solid foundation for student growth and achievement has become even more vital. With that in mind, our conference focus is evolving. The Academy provides principals with the foundation skills necessary to be impactful leaders who know how to create change. The Winter Conference needs to provide principals with an avenue to strengthen the foundation of the school staff, while at the same time reinforcing administrative skills learned through the Academy.

We challenge all readers to study the focus of upcoming winter conferences, share the conference opportunities with school improvement teams and make a plan to use professional development monies to bring teams of teachers to the conference with the goal of both administrative



rejuvenation and staff improvement. As a final challenge, we encourage everyone to plan early. Current facilities permit the accommodation of only 500 participants. The Alumni Association will address sustained conference growth during its annual meetings. Your early planning and registration will get you that guaranteed 'front row seat' at the next **IPLA Alumni Association Winter Conference**.

SKAGGS continued on page 1

meet middle class standards. For those children who have never been exposed to middle class life and our "hidden rules", school can be like a foreign land. Likewise, middle class school staff can become quite frustrated with children and families of poverty who live life by a different set of rules.

It seems Miss Jane was the most insightful, realizing that Jed, Granny, Jethro and Elly May needed to be taught the hidden rules of the wealthy in order to successfully function in Beverly Hills. Just as Miss Jane taught many lessons to the Clampet family, so too must we teach the hidden rules to our students. Being perhaps the only contact many of our students have with the middle class mainstream, this is an opportunity we should seize. Otherwise, these children may fail in school and will likely fail at maintaining employment as adults.

Dr. Payne's work addresses several components in which you could base your teachings of the middle class rules. I believe language is perhaps one that could have the biggest impact in the lives of children. When speaking, the use of formal register in the appropriate setting is a "hidden rule" among the middle class. Expecting your staff and students to use formal register at school

could be an important lesson for children who are only familiar with speaking in casual register. Further, if a child learns to speak in formal register, we might expect that child's reading and writing skills to improve, too.

Another component that Dr. Payne addresses is to recognize and teach children to capitalize on the resources they do have. While children of poverty may not have financial resources, they may have other resources (emotional, mental, physical, spiritual, support systems, role models, or knowledge of hidden rules), which they can use to offset resources that are lacking. If we as educators are aware of the resources a child does and does not have, then we have a much better shot of making a difference in that child's life.

I highly recommend Dr. Payne's book to be used for study with your staff or study group. It is an insightful look into the power that the class system of our culture wields in the lives of children. As you read, you will definitely have many Ah-ha! moments, as well as learn some of the "hidden rules" of poverty, middle class, and wealth. Blended with your creativity and that of your staff, you are sure to find ways to better meet the needs of your students.



Robert Eaker

Building a Professional Learning Community

November 18, 2004
from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM

At the Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel and Suites/Keystone at the Crossing

This is an RSVP event. Please complete the registration form and return it with a \$50.00 check or P.O. made out to the IPLA Alumni Association.

RSVP by November 1, 2004

Name _____ IPLA Group Number _____

First Name for Name Tag _____

Position ☐ Central Office ☐ Principal ☐ Asst. Principal ☐ Teacher ☐ Other
(check one)

School Corporation/Organization _____ **Corp. No.** _____

Corporation Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

School Name _____ **School No.** _____

School Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone _____ **Email** _____

Home Address _____
(if not employed in a school corporation)

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Your fee of \$50.00 will cover your registration and cost of food at breaks. Hotel and lunch costs will be the participant's responsibility.

Make checks payable to IPLA Alumni Association, Inc.

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Room 229, State House, Indianapolis, IN 46204
Phone (317) 232-9004

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C A L E N D A R

November 17, 2004	Bob Eaker – Building a Professional Learning Community
November 17-18, 2004	Groups 40 and 41 Sessions Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel and Suites
January 25-26, 2005	15th Annual IPLA Winter Conference Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel and Suites

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